



BRANDING

What's your sign?

Remember how Zodiac signs are supposed to be determining factors in your personality? How knowing someone's astrological sign would instantly tell you something about that person and create a connection.

Your brand is like that. It represents your farm's personality.

The American Marketing Association defines a brand as a "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of other sellers.

A good brand:

- Delivers the message clearly
- Confirms your credibility
- Connects to your target prospects emotionally
- Motivates the buyer
- Concretes User Loyalty

Integrate your brand strategies through your company at every point of public contact. Your brand resides within the hearts and minds of customers, clients, and prospects. It is the sum total of their experiences and perceptions, some of which you can influence, and some that you cannot.

It's an ongoing process and important to spend time investing in researching, defining, and building your brand. It's a foundational piece in your marketing communications.

Winning their Hearts and Minds

Your brand is defined by the accomplishments of your best employee, as well as the mishaps of the worst hire that you ever made. Your brand is influenced by the person who answers the phone, your signs, the condition of your trucks and comments on your Facebook page.

Brands are sponges for content, for images, for fleeting feelings. They become psychological concepts held in the minds of the public, where they may stay forever. You can't entirely control a brand, you only guide and influence it.

You must convey an engaging, unique, relevant, and consistent message to your target audience. It's important to create a positive emotional attachment to the brand.

It's not enough just to be "good," people expect that. You've got to establish a stronger expectation and bond between your customer and you.

It's like the qualities that separate acquaintances from friends and friends from family.



Brands that Delight

The market research firm, Brand Keys has determined that “delight is the new differentiator.” Here are some of top brands for evoking customer delight:

Netflix
Apple
Walgreens
Hyundai

Mary Kay
J. Crew
Samsung
Nikon

Godiva Chocolates—the very name conjures up an image of sinful indulgence. It’s almost sexy. But it just represents chocolate. Pretty good chocolate but there’s lots of good chocolate.

Starbucks represents the gold standard, they made the mundane act of buying a cup of coffee into an experience. They did so by creating a memorable brand: a unique name and a memorable logo that made coffee not just coffee, but a welcoming, comfortable place to go and be seen. The Starbucks brand created a culture.

You don’t just want to be the farm that has a corn maze, hay rides, meat or produce, you take people back to a simpler time and place. You restore their childhood.

Building your Brand

1. Craft a “brand promise.” This is primarily an internal document to guide employee interactions with the public and decision-making concerning customers and prospects.

Create your brand story. Describe the personality or character with words just as if you were writing a biography or personal ad.

This might be an expanded “elevator speech” that concentrates on how your business will differentiate itself from competitors.

At this point, you probably should bring in a graphic designer or someone with branding experience to involve them in the entire process.

1. Establish a personality/voice.

2. Determine if a tagline needs to amplify your name. Will someone know immediately what you’re offering?

3. Develop your logo.



Traditional Media (ads, billboards)

1. Establish graphic standards documenting the rules for logo usage, colors and type faces, and other graphic elements. This should be available to employees and vendors who will need to produce brand materials.
2. Document color palette, type fonts, illustrative styles and other visual elements of the brand.
3. Brainstorm and then create your website and/or your blog with your designer (and writer)
4. Designate uniforms, vehicles and signage associated with the brand. Have members of your team wear a branded t-shirt or baseball cap.
5. Establish templates for promotional literature, sales sheets, flyers, etc.

Social Media (Facebook, Twitter)

1. Use your logo as your profile image.
2. Keep your message consistent with other media. If you're offering a special, promote it through every avenue; ads, flyers as well as Facebook & Twitter.
3. Be as approachable as possible. You want to create "friends" not just "customers."
4. Write quality content, don't make this an afterthought.
5. Provide links to articles, sites that would interest your followers.
6. Create polls and contests. The more interactive you are, the better.
7. Your followers can become ambassadors for you. Suggesting your page/profile to their friends, sharing your links, etc.

Brand Smart from the Start

- Deliver the message clearly
- Confirm your credibility
- Connect to your target prospects emotionally
- Motivate the buyer
- Concrete User Loyalty

Create a connection, evoke an emotion, build relationships.

You'll save money and energy by doing it right the first time. If you've established a brand, new opportunities such as ads are much easier to execute. You don't have to come up with what to say or what it'll look like.

Customers won't have to ask "what's your sign?" they'll know what it is.